

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF:
Paul Scullion
Manager, Safety
Association of Global Automakers, Inc.
On Raised Bill 1040

Submitted to the
Connecticut Joint Transportation Committee

March 8, 2013

Dear Co-Chairs Maynard and Guerrera and members of the Committee:

The Association of Global Automakers, Inc. ("Global Automakers")¹ appreciates the opportunity to provide comments in **support of HB 1040**. Global Automakers represents international motor vehicle manufacturers, original equipment suppliers, and other automotive-related trade associations. Our members' market share of both U.S. sales and production is 40%. Nearly half of all the vehicles sold in America by international automakers are manufactured at U.S. production facilities. Our members operate more than 230 production, design, R&D, sales, finance and other facilities across the United States.

The issue of counterfeit and non-functional replacement airbags is a serious safety problem potentially affecting thousands of drivers on the road today. In October 2012, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) issued a consumer advisory to alert vehicle owners and repair professionals to the dangers of counterfeit airbags that have been installed in vehicles. We have worked closely with NHTSA to provide guidance for vehicle owners concerned that such airbags may have been installed in their vehicle.

Safety is of paramount concern to automobile original equipment manufacturers (OEMs). Despite the unauthorized use of manufacturer trademarks to exploit the trust that consumers place in OEM airbags and equipment, we believe this bill is required first and foremost to address the serious public safety issue of non-functional replacement airbags being installed in vehicles.

¹ The Association of Global Automakers represents international motor vehicle manufacturers, original equipment suppliers, and other automotive-related trade associations. Our members include American Honda Motor Co., American Suzuki Motor Corp., Aston Martin Lagonda of North America, Inc., Ferrari North America, Inc., Hyundai Motor America, Isuzu Motors America, Inc., Kia Motors America, Inc., Maserati North America, Inc., McLaren Automotive Ltd., Nissan North America, Inc., Peugeot Motors of America, Subaru of America, and Toyota Motor North America, Inc. We work with industry leaders, legislators, regulators, and other stakeholders in the United States to create public policies that improve motor vehicle safety, encourage technological innovation and protect our planet. Our goal is to foster an open and competitive automotive marketplace that encourages investment, job growth, and development of vehicles that can enhance Americans' quality of life. For more information, visit www.globalautomakers.org.



Vehicle manufacturers design vehicles to meet or exceed strict government safety standards and earn high safety ratings in consumer information tests, and the vehicle's structural design and restraint systems play a pivotal role in achieving this. In a collision, the vehicle structure and restraint systems, including the airbag and seat belts, perform in unison to effectively manage the crash forces that the occupant is exposed to. Each of these systems are calibrated to a specific make, model, and model year vehicle, and minor changes to one aspect of the overall system can change the performance and potential injury outcome in a crash. Those facilitating the installation of a counterfeit or non-functional airbag are deliberately compromising the protection afforded to occupants in the event of a crash, exposing them to a higher risk of injury.

We believe it is wrong to allow an individual to intentionally make, distribute, sell, install, misrepresent, or otherwise encourage the use of non-functional or counterfeit airbags without serious consequences. Therefore Global Automakers urges the committee and state legislature to pass HB1040.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Scullion", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paul Scullion
Manager, Safety
Association of Global Automakers, Inc.